

**SOLICITATION FOR APPLICATIONS  
NUMBER  
DE-PS48-98R800658**



**Building a Sustainable Future Small Grant Program  
for Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities**

Issuing Office: U.S. Department of Energy  
Denver Regional Support Office  
Center of Excellence for Sustainable Development  
1617 Cole Boulevard; MS 1721  
Golden, CO 80401

Date Issued: May 29, 1998

**Applications Due: June 30, 1998**

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**I. OVERVIEW OF GRANT PROGRAM AND APPLICATION PROCESS**

**A. Program Description**

The Department of Energy's (DOE's) Building a Sustainable Future grant program is designed to promote sustainable development projects in the 72 urban and 33 rural communities designated as federal Empowerment Zones or Enterprise Communities (EZ/EC's). On December 21, 1994, the Clinton Administration announced the EZ/EC program to assist distressed communities. In applying for EZ/EC designation, communities had to address four key principles: 1) economic opportunity, 2) sustainable community development, 3) community-based partnerships, and 4) strategic vision for change. The Building a Sustainable Future grants have been set up to support sustainable community development activities in these communities.

DOE's Denver Regional Support Office of the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy will consider proposals from interested EZ/EC's to help fund capacity building projects and sustainable community development activities. Projects will be managed by DOE's Center of Excellence for Sustainable Development. Funding can be used for activities that encourage the use of energy efficient technologies such as design charrettes, industrial ecology training, visioning exercises, energy efficient land-use planning techniques, and economic studies of the benefits of energy efficiency on jobs and the environment. Section IV provides examples of the types of activities EZ/EC communities could pursue with program funding.

**B. Eligibility and Available Funds**

The project or activity must be conducted in one of the 105 currently designated Federal Empowerment Zones or Enterprise Communities. Any non-profit or non-federal public organization (501(c)(3) non-profit or State, City, County or Town office) can apply. Organizations/offices can sub-contract with non-profit or for-profit organizations for specific services. If the applicant does not represent the main authorized Empowerment Zone or Enterprise Community implementing office, a letter of support from that office is needed as part of the application process. Cost-sharing must be at least 5 percent of the total project budget and can be in the form of financial or in-kind resources (e.g., materials, labor). DOE will fund up to \$50,000 per project. Subject to the availability of funds, DOE anticipates that approximately \$250,000 will be available this fiscal year to provide between 7 to 10 small grants (\$10,000 to \$50,000 in size).

**C. How to Apply**

Section III of this solicitation describes the required format for applications and the evaluation criteria that will be used for selecting projects. The forms that are required to be submitted with the application narrative and budget are listed in Section V. Applications should be mailed to the attention of Dennis Maez, Department of Energy, Denver Regional Support Office, 1617 Cole Boulevard - Building MS 1721, Golden, CO, 80401. Please submit 4 copies of your application, bound by staple without any special binders or covers. **Applications must be received by 5:00 pm Tuesday, June 30, 1998.** Any application received after this time will be considered a late submission and will not be considered. Questions should be directed in writing to Dennis Maez at [dennis.maez@hq.doe.gov](mailto:dennis.maez@hq.doe.gov) or send a fax to (303)275-4830. Project selections should be announced by August 1, 1998.

## II. GENERAL INFORMATION

### A. Pre-application Conference

A pre-application conference is not planned for this solicitation.

### B. Amendments

Any amendments to this solicitation will be mailed upon request or available electronically through the Golden Field Office web site <http://www.eren.doe.gov/golden/solicitations.html>.

### C. Award Instrument

DOE will issue a grant to successful Applicants. Appropriate provisions will be negotiated and incorporated in any resulting agreement as determined by the Applicant's status (small business, non-profit, etc.) and particular project.

### D. Cost Sharing

Cost-sharing must be at least 5 percent of the total project budget and can be in the form of financial or in-kind resources (e.g., materials, labor). See Section III on Application Format and Evaluation Criteria for a breakdown on ratings for different levels of cost-sharing.

### E. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number

The CFDA number for this solicitation is 81.086, Conservation Research and Development. This information is provided for completion of Block 10 of the Application for Federal Assistance, Standard Form (SF) 424 attached hereto. Additionally, it is the opinion of DOE that Executive Order 12372 which requires review of certain Financial Assistance applications by states does not apply to this action and therefore applicants should check "no" in Block 16-B of the SF 424 form.

### F. Sub-Awards to Debarred and Suspended Parties

Applicants and Participants, at any tier must not make any award or permit any award (subcontract) to any party which is debarred, suspended, or is otherwise excluded from or ineligible for participation in Federal Assistance programs under Executive Order 12549, "Debarment and Suspension" or is otherwise ineligible hereunder.

### G. Financial Assistance for Application Preparation

No funding will be available under the DOE Minority Economic Impact (MEI) loan program for preparation of applications in response to this solicitation. DOE assumes no responsibility for costs of preparing or submitting applications. In addition, awarded funds may not be used for costs of preparing or submitting applications.

### H. Notice Regarding the Purchase of American-made Equipment and Products

It is the sense of Congress that, to the greatest extent practicable, all equipment and products purchased with the funds made available under this award should be American-made.

## III. APPLICATION FORMAT AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

### A. Evaluation Criteria

Submitting an application does not guarantee funding. Applications will be evaluated by technical review teams. For each Section and Sub-section below which has "( High/Low)" written next to it, a "High", "Medium High", "Medium", "Medium Low" or "Low" rating will be assigned by consensus of the review team. A final High/Low rating will be assigned to the overall application, again by consensus. Only applications given an overall "High" rating for the narrative/workplan will be considered for selection. Funding will depend upon the availability of funds, approval of the project or activity by DOE, and complete review of application forms, and technical and cost proposals. The selection official will consider geographical diversity, project diversity, and the balance between urban and rural projects when making final selections. Evaluation of the overall application will consider the clarity and completeness of the project concept, whether the project is realistic, and the benefits to the EZ/EC.

**B. Required Application Format and Materials**

Applications must contain a work plan with the following sections and sub-sections, letters of commitment, a letter of support from the main EZ/EC organization (if necessary), and a budget plan.

**i. Narrative/work plan of the application (not to exceed 6 pages).**

The work plan is one of the most important aspects of your application and (assuming that all other required materials are submitted) will be used as the primary basis for selection. The narrative section of the application shall be a maximum of six 8 1/2 by 11 inch pages, with normal type size (12 CPI), and at least 1" margins. Narratives over six pages will not be considered. Work plans should include the following subsections:

**a. Summary.** Identify the main objectives and activities of the application and the EZ/EC you will be working in.

**b. (High/Low) Relative Background and Experience.** State the nature of your organization (i.e., how long it has been in existence, if it is incorporated, etc.), what qualification your organization has to ensure success, and the involvement your organization has with current and past EZ/EC activities. Evaluation of this section will consider the experience of project staff and the past experience of the organizations.

**c. Project Description.** State the purpose of the project, who you will be working with, the project timeline, and expected results including:

- 1. (High/Low) Relevance to Sustainable Community Development Objectives.** Provide an explanation of how the proposed project and/or activities support the objectives of Sustainable Community Development associated with implementation efforts in your EZ or EC. Evaluation of this section will be based on the relevance of the proposed project: 1) to the community's economic and environmental needs and 2) to the EZ/EC's goals in the area of sustainable development.
- 2. (High/Low) Evidence of EZ/EC Leadership and Commitment and Public Participation.** Describe how the applicant is community-based and/or plans to involve the community in the project. Evaluation of this section will be based on the: 1) evidence of strong leadership, public involvement and community commitment, 2) extent and relevance of other on-going EZ/EC activities, and 3) extent of integration with current EZ/EC activities.
- 3. (High/Low) Integration of Energy Efficiency Technologies.** Describe any activities in your application which promote the use of efficiency technologies or improve energy efficiency. Evaluation of this section will be based on 1) the number and type of energy efficiency technologies proposed, and 2) the impact of energy efficiency technologies to overall project success.

**d. (High/Low) Conclusion.** Discuss how the applicant will evaluate and measure success, including the anticipated benefits and challenges in implementing the project. Evaluation of this section will be based on 1) the quality of the plan for measuring and evaluating success of the project, and 2) the connection between the project's and broader community's objectives.

**e. Appendix.** Provide resumes of up to 3 key personnel involved with project. (not counted in 6 page limit).

**ii. Letter(s) of commitment (not counted as part of 6 page limit)**

If your proposed project includes significant involvement of other community organizations, your application must include letters of commitment from these organizations. If your organization or office does not represent the main authorized EZ or EC implementing office, a letter of support from that office is needed.

**iii. (High/Low) A Budget Plan (not counted as part of 6 page limit)**

Budget figures should support your work plan narrative. DOE funding for this solicitation will not exceed \$50,000. Cost-sharing must be at least 5 percent of the total project budget in order to be eligible for selection and can be in the form of financial or in-kind resources (e.g., materials, labor). Funds identified as cost-share must be applied directly to activities proposed in the workplan and must be from an organization other than the U.S. DOE. The fraction of cost-sharing will be given the following ratings in the evaluation process: less than 10% = low; 10% to 50% = medium; and greater than 50% = high.

#### IV. TYPES OF PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING

Actions that can build a more sustainable future include developing community-driven strategic planning and collaborative regional planning; improving community and building design; decreasing sprawl; and creating strong, diversified local economies while increasing jobs and other economic opportunities. This following list of activities is intended to give communities a sense for the types of activities funded through this grant program. It is not a comprehensive list.

**1. Energy Efficiency and Green Design:** Communities may choose from a variety of seminars and training programs to increase energy efficiency in their neighborhoods. For example, communities can learn about design tools and low cost techniques for incorporating passive solar and other energy efficiency technologies into the design and construction of affordable housing.

**2. Land Use Planning:** Communities can participate in training and workshops designed to encourage more environmentally responsible land use, regional growth and development. Using the PLACE3S planning process, for example, communities can assess the economic, environmental, tax and energy impacts of new development and more effectively connect solar access, transportation planning and land use planning issues to revitalization and development plans. Companion GIS-based programs can be utilized to help communities do calculations on the costs and benefits of development decisions.

**3. Visioning Exercises:** Communities wanting to build consensus around planning and development efforts and envision new possibilities for their community can participate in a variety of visioning and learning exercises. Visioning exercises can involve entire neighborhoods in designing and building community spaces -- parks, outdoor meeting places, etc.

**4. Design Charrettes:** Charrettes are intensive workshops involving a mix of professionals who work with a neighborhood to solve specific design problems. Design charrettes can be one day long or last a week depending on the scope and detail of the problems and issues tackled.

**5. Town Meetings on Sustainable Development:** EZ/EC s may wish to follow the example of Atlanta which held a multi-day town meeting on the sustainable development components of their EZ implementation plan. Communities may want specific training and technical assistance on capacity building for local communities and organizations in sustainable planning and development to build broad consensus among EZ/EC residents on priorities and goals.

**6. Household Sustainable Living:** Communities can seek training in how to set up neighborhood- based programs designed to assist households in making positive, earth-friendly, sustainable changes in their daily lifestyle practices.

**7. Peer Exchanges:** Peer-to-peer exchanges can be an effective way to help communities learn about sustainable development strategies designed and tested elsewhere. Through partnerships with various organizations, communities can take advantage of peer-to-peer networks around the country.

**8. Economic Renewal:** Programs are available which offer workbooks and guidebooks providing step-by-step instructions for assessing a community's unique conditions and developing practical projects to keep financial resources within a community and use them for job creation.

**9. Technical Assistance from DOE Laboratories:** DOE's Virtual Lab aims to establish a network of DOE laboratory experts assigned to provide information and technical assistance to industries and communities, and provide funding for those experts to offer free consultation for up to one week per customer.

For more information contact Dennis Maez at [dennis.maez@hq.doe.gov](mailto:dennis.maez@hq.doe.gov). Also, see the President's Council on Sustainable Development report entitled "Sustainable America: A New Consensus for Prosperity, Opportunity, and a Healthy Environment for the Future" for a further description of activities that build a sustainable future. Copies of the report can be obtained by calling DOE's Clearinghouse at 1-800-363-3732.

## V. LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

The following forms are enclosed and must be submitted with your application:

1. Application for Federal Assistance, SF-424 (4/88)
2. Federal Assistance Budget Information, DOE F 4600.4 (4/94)
3. Budget Explanation Page for DOE F4600.4, GO-PF20 (5/18/98)
4. Pre-Award Information Sheet, GO-PF19 (1/98)
5. U.S. DOE Assurance of Compliance, DOE F 1600.5 (6/94)
6. Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; and Drug-Free Workplace Requirements, FA-CERTS (3/97)
7. Disclosure of Lobbying Activities, SF-LLL (undated)
8. Environmental Checklist, GO-EF1 (12/96)
9. SF 3881, ACH Vendor Enrollment Form (12/90)

Questions or comments regarding this solicitation or any of the requested information or forms should be addressed in writing to Dennis Maez via email at [dennis.maez@hq.doe.gov](mailto:dennis.maez@hq.doe.gov) or via fax at (303) 275-4830.